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INFORMATION

July 25, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: HENRY A. KISSINGER

FROM: TOM LATIMER

SUBJECT: CIA Memo on PRC Relations with
Hanoi and Pyongyang

This is one of the best memoranda written on the PRC and Vietnam by CIA. You will find particularly interesting the section on Vietnam from pages 6 through 14.

Among the several points the memo makes are the following:

- ON-FILE NSC RELEASE
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY
- " . . . it seems a moot point whether Peking has ever been greatly interested in Hanoi's ultimate war aims. "
 - " . . . as the possibility of at least a limited rapprochement with Washington -- for reasons and on issues not directly related to Vietnam -- became brighter, Peking's view of Hanoi's aims probably also changed. Moscow was calling for an Asian collective security pact, which obviously was in very large measure aimed against China. If the U.S. were to leave Southeast Asia, the Soviets would attempt to fill the resultant vacuum, and China would be left to face Moscow alone. In such circumstances, a military defeat or political humiliation for Washington in Vietnam probably seemed undesirable to Peking. "
 - " Ironically, the (April 1972) offensive, although certainly a production of considerable drama, has had the effect of making Hanoi a less important cockpit for the Sino-Soviet diplomatic struggle. "
 - " Like the Chinese, the Soviets now had good reason to want an end to the conflict. "
 - " . . . Peking has at no point condemned the President's proposal of May 8 . . . "

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-- ". . . the Chinese could at present consider Hanoi's intransigence on political issues a greater obstacle to the realizations of Chinese aims in Indochina than U.S. military actions.'

The CIA memo notes, however, that, despite Peking's obvious unhappiness with Hanoi's current course, the Chinese are protecting themselves against charges that they failed to support an ally. To this end, the Chinese are beefing up the logistical structure on their side of the border and making it clear that they will not abandon North Vietnam and cut off its economic and military support.

Attachment

24 July 1972



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